

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 25, 2018

Received & Inspected

MAY 29 2018

FCC Mailroom

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
455 Twelfth Street SW
Washington DC 20554

RE: Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to
Infrastructure Investment, WC Docket No. 17-84

Dear Chairman Pai:

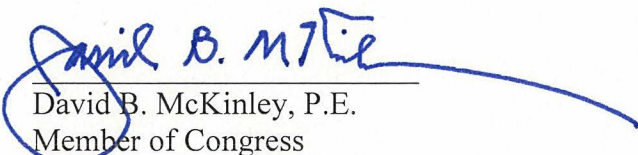
Access to high-speed broadband is essential to U.S. competitiveness, job creation, educational opportunity, and full participation in civic life. As such, we fully support Commission action to accelerate wireline broadband deployment to all Americans, particularly rural communities.


Recognizing that pole attachments can be a key input for many broadband deployment projects, the Commission is currently reviewing its pole attachment rules, including consideration of One-Touch Make-Ready (OTMR) proposals. One-Touch Make-Ready would allow companies seeking to add equipment to a utility pole to move the pre-existing equipment of telephone, cable, and utility companies already on the pole.

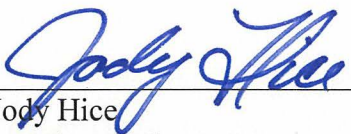
While we recognize that streamlining pole attachment make-ready processes can be beneficial, we urge the Commission to ensure that any make-ready policy that it adopts include safeguards that would minimize disruptions in service to consumers, protect public and worker safety, and honor collective bargaining agreements. Existing attachers are in the best position to reduce customer outages, and have the skilled, trained workforce to ensure that make-ready work is done properly and safely.

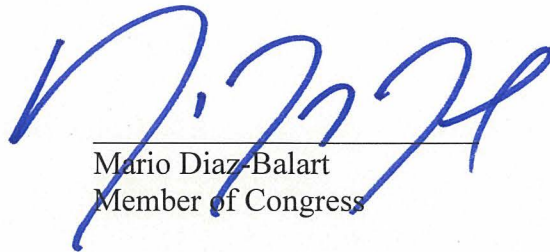
Moreover, as both unions and their employers acknowledge, concerns about delays are insufficient to justify impairment of the contractual obligations of existing attachers with collective bargaining agreements. Any Commission action on OTMR must respect those collective bargaining agreements while serving to protect and promote good, career jobs in communities across the United States.


Sincerely,


David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress

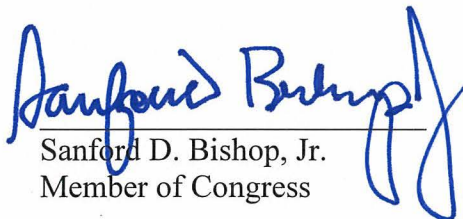

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

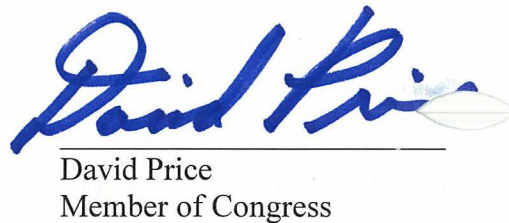

Jody Hice
Member of Congress


Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress

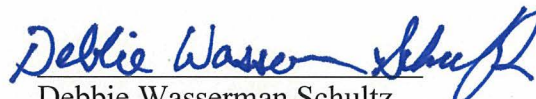

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress


Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress


David Price
Member of Congress


Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress


Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress


Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress


Jim Himes
Member of Congress


Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Alma Adams
U.S. House of Representatives
222 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Adams:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

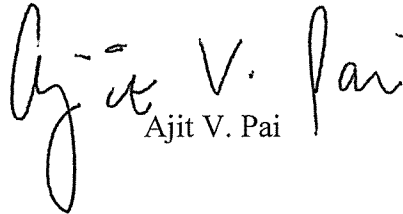
That’s why one of my first acts as Chairman was to create the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee to advise the Commission on how to best remove barriers to broadband deployment, such as delays in new pole attachments. In January 2018, the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee recommended the Commission take steps to promote competitive access to broadband infrastructure, including adopting OTMR for simple attachments in the communications space and improving the FCC’s pole attachment process for complex and non-communications space attachments.

On July 11, I circulated for my colleagues’ consideration an order that adopts a new pole attachment process consistent with the recommendations of the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. If adopted, the order will fundamentally shift the framework for the vast majority of attachments governed by federal law by adopting OTMR, permitting the party with the strongest incentive—the new attacher—to quickly perform all make-ready work, rather than spreading the work across multiple parties. By making it quicker and cheaper to attach to poles, we can accelerate network buildout and make it easier for new entrants to provide more broadband competition. As you suggest, the draft order includes safeguards to protect the public and worker safety and excludes from OTMR new attachments that are more complicated or above the “communications space” of a pole, where safety and reliability risks are greater. The draft order also respects existing collective bargaining agreements, allowing union labor to be present for survey and make-ready work and to conduct post-make-ready inspections through such contracts with existing attachers. Based on the record, the proposed OTMR regime is expected to speed broadband deployment without substantial service interruptions or danger to the public or workers. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue.

Page 2—The Honorable Alma Adams

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable David B. McKinley
U.S. House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McKinley:

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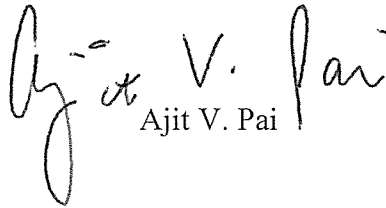
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Ajit V. Pai



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THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Darren Soto
U.S. House of Representatives
1429 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

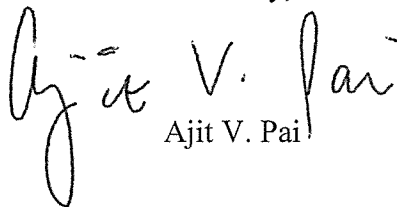
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jody Hice
U.S. House of Representatives
324 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hice:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

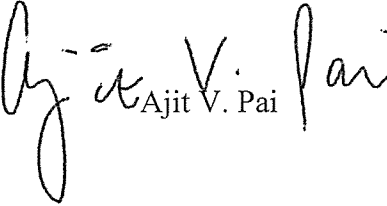
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Walter B. Jones
U.S. House of Representatives
2333 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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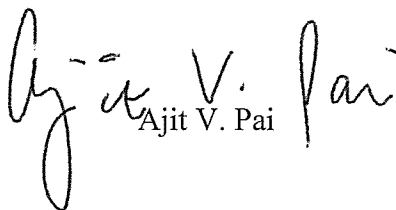
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
2407 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Bishop:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

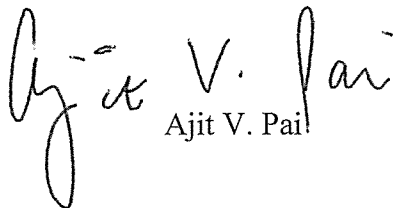
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Ted Deutch
U.S. House of Representatives
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Deutch:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

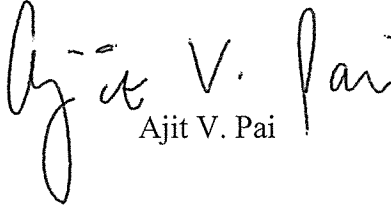
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Page 2—The Honorable Ted Deutch

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Ajit V. Pai



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THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Ro Khanna
U.S. House of Representatives
513 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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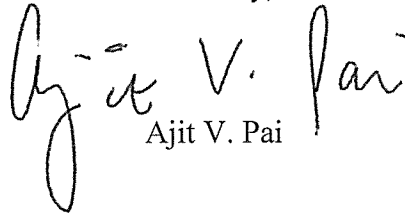
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Page 2—The Honorable Ro Khanna

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Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
U.S. House of Representatives
440 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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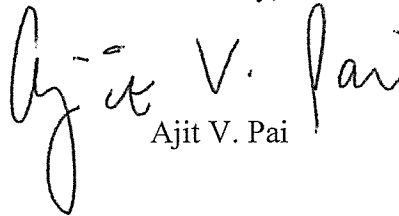
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Page 2—The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable G.K. Butterfield
U.S. House of Representatives
2080 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Butterfield:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

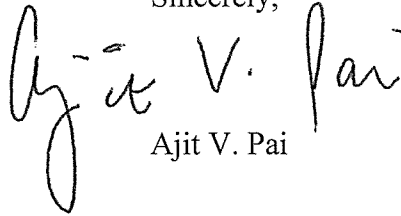
That’s why one of my first acts as Chairman was to create the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee to advise the Commission on how to best remove barriers to broadband deployment, such as delays in new pole attachments. In January 2018, the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee recommended the Commission take steps to promote competitive access to broadband infrastructure, including adopting OTMR for simple attachments in the communications space and improving the FCC’s pole attachment process for complex and non-communications space attachments.

On July 11, I circulated for my colleagues’ consideration an order that adopts a new pole attachment process consistent with the recommendations of the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. If adopted, the order will fundamentally shift the framework for the vast majority of attachments governed by federal law by adopting OTMR, permitting the party with the strongest incentive—the new attacher—to quickly perform all make-ready work, rather than spreading the work across multiple parties. By making it quicker and cheaper to attach to poles, we can accelerate network buildout and make it easier for new entrants to provide more broadband competition. As you suggest, the draft order includes safeguards to protect the public and worker safety and excludes from OTMR new attachments that are more complicated or above the “communications space” of a pole, where safety and reliability risks are greater. The draft order also respects existing collective bargaining agreements, allowing union labor to be present for survey and make-ready work and to conduct post-make-ready inspections through such contracts with existing attachers. Based on the record, the proposed OTMR regime is expected to speed broadband deployment without substantial service interruptions or danger to the public or workers. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue.

Page 2—The Honorable G.K. Butterfield

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable David E. Price
U.S. House of Representatives
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Price:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

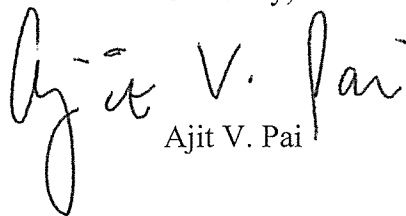
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Page 2—The Honorable David E. Price

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
U.S. House of Representatives
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz:

Thank you for your letter on pole attachments and “one-touch make-ready” (OTMR) proposals. I agree that access to high-speed broadband is essential to the quality of life for all American citizens. My highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. But the plain reality is that if you live in rural America, you are much less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a city. If you live in a low-income neighborhood, you are less likely to have high-speed Internet access than if you live in a wealthier area. To change that, we need massive investment to construct, expand, and improve wired and wireless networks. And to spur that investment, the FCC needs to remove outdated and unnecessary barriers.

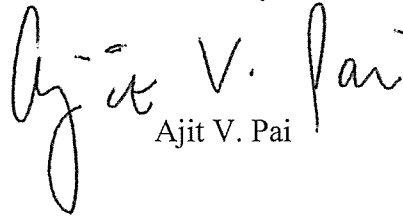
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Page 2—The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Ajit" is written with a large, looped 'A' and a small 'i'. The middle initial "V." is written with a simple 'V' followed by a period. The last name "Pai" is written with a large 'P' and a cursive 'ai'.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jim Himes
U.S. House of Representatives
1227 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Himes:

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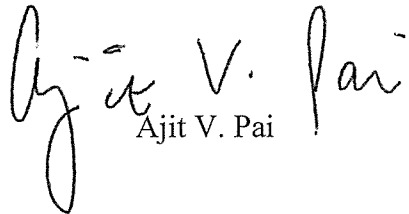
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Ajit V. Pai